

Trucks and buses require Drive Clean tests

Effective September 30, 1999, Ontario's Drive Clean emissions-testing program will include heavy-duty trucks and buses. This expansion complements the mandatory emissions testing now in place for light-duty vehicles – cars, vans, pick-up trucks and sports utility vehicles – in the Greater Toronto Area and the Hamilton-Wentworth region.

As one of the most comprehensive emissions testing programs in North America, Drive Clean will affect nearly five million vehicles when it is fully operational in 2001.

With the addition of heavy-duty trucks and buses to its vehicle emissions testing program, Ontario's Drive Clean is at the forefront of similar programs in North America to reduce smog-causing pollutants from vehicle emissions.

Cars, trucks and buses are our biggest local source of smog-causing pollutants. And, while smog makes life uncomfortable for all of us, it presents a particular risk for children, the elderly and those with respiratory illnesses. That's where Ontario's Drive Clean program enters the picture, with its target of reducing smog-causing pollutants from vehicle emissions by up to 22 per cent.

As of September 30, 1999, all diesel trucks and buses in Ontario more than three model years old with registered gross weights over 4,500 kg, must pass an annual emissions test in order to have their registrations renewed. Heavy-duty vehicles that do not pass the test must be repaired, retested and pass.

All resale trucks and buses, no matter how old they are, must pass an emissions test before they can be licensed for the road under new ownership.

Non-diesel vehicles – those powered by gasoline, propane or natural gas – must also be tested if they are registered in the Drive Clean program area for light-duty vehicles. Light-duty vehicles are those weighing 4,500 kg or less.

Currently, the light-duty vehicle program is in place in the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton-Wentworth Region. In 2001, the light-duty vehicle program will expand across southern Ontario to include 13 other urban centres and their surrounding areas, from Peterborough to Windsor.

There are approximately 200,000 heavy-duty trucks and buses licensed for on-road use in Ontario.

Accredited tests

Emissions testing and retesting for heavy-duty vehicles must be done at an accredited Drive Clean facility or by an accredited Drive Clean mobile unit, although repairs may be carried out wherever the vehicle owner chooses.

To be accredited to perform emissions tests, garages and vehicle service facilities must have approved testing equipment and the emissions inspectors must be trained to Ontario standards.

The exhaust from heavy-duty vehicles will be tested for opacity – the amount of light



Look for this official sign when getting your heavy-duty vehicle tested.

that is blocked by the exhaust smoke – in accordance with the Society of Automotive Engineers' standard "Snap Acceleration Smoke Test Procedure for Heavy-Duty Diesel-Powered Vehicles" (SAE J1667). The particulate matter (a major constituent of smog) in the emissions is measured by a sensor placed in the exhaust stack. The dirtier the smoke, the less light it transmits and the higher the opacity.

Diesel vehicles that are 1991 models or newer must meet an opacity standard of 40 per cent. That is, 60 per cent or more of the light used in the test must pass through the emissions. The opacity standard for 1990 and older models is 55 per cent, which means the emissions must allow 45 per cent or more of the light to pass.

Non-diesel powered vehicles will undergo a two-speed idle test where emissions are measured at two pre-determined RPM settings. The test measures hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide.

Program differences

There are significant differences between the existing Drive Clean program for light-duty vehicles and the program for heavy-duty trucks and buses:

- The test is annual for heavy-duty trucks and buses, while cars and other light vehicles will be tested every two years.
- There is no maximum age limit on the heavy-duty trucks and buses to be tested, as there is (less than 20 model years in age) for light-duty vehicles.
- There is no repair cost limit for heavy-duty trucks and buses. Faulty emissions systems must be repaired before vehicle registrations can be renewed.
- There is no "conditional pass", allowing repairs to be deferred until the next emissions test, as there is for cars and light trucks.

- While the emissions test fee is set at \$30 (plus GST) and the retest fee at \$15 (plus GST) for light cars and trucks, the test and retest fees for heavy-duty vehicles will be set by the Drive Clean facilities themselves at market rates.

Ontario's Smog Patrol

Drive Clean's requirement for emissions testing for heavy-duty trucks and buses is augmented by Ontario's Smog Patrol. The Smog Patrol is an on-road enforcement program targeting grossly polluting vehicles – those emitting thick and visible smoke from their exhaust systems.

Smog Patrol officers work with local police services and the Ontario Provincial Police to identify grossly polluting vehicles, whether registered in Ontario or in other provinces or the United States.

Owners or operators of vehicles that fail on-road inspections may be issued tickets, with penalties ranging from \$305 for passenger vehicles to \$425 for heavy-duty vehicles. If prosecuted under the Provincial Offences Act, owners or drivers could face fines up to \$50,000 while corporations can face fines up to \$200,000.

For further information:

1-888-758-2999 or visit our Web site, www.driveclean.com